

'POINTLESS PAPERWORK' OR NECESSARY? MIXED VIEWS OVER GERMANY'S NEW 'RECEIPT OBLIGATION'

When you're buying morning rolls, bratwurst or ice-cream it's unusual to be offered a receipt. But under a new law, retailers in Germany have to do this. There's been a mixed reaction so far.



A pile of receipts in a bag at a bakery in Hanover, Lower Saxony.

Turning into a long paper snake, receipts curl up at the cash desk in a Dresden branch of the Möbius bakery. Hardly any customers who pop in to buy bread rolls, cakes or pastries want to take their receipt with them, so they are left on the counter.

Bakery sales assistant Klaus Barche collects the receipts in a transparent box, feeling irritated by the "pointless paper chaos".

Previously, a roll of paper used to last three to five days in the cash register. But now at least one roll is printed per day.

"It annoys us, it annoys the customers," says Barche.

But under a [new law which came into force on January 1st](#), German retailers have a "receipt obligation" (Bon-Zwang or Bonpflicht) and must issue a record of the item or service they have sold to customers.